Symposium Title: Reward sensitivity predicts a range of risky health behaviours in non-clinical samples.

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Symposium Abstract:
Reward sensitivity, a trait reflecting hypervigilance and approach behaviour towards rewarding cues in the environment, has been shown to be a risk factor for several health behaviours, though the precise contexts and mechanisms underlying this risk remain to be determined. This symposium will provide a snapshot of research investigating the influence of reward sensitivity traits in a range of health behaviours and context manipulations. The first study manipulates the presence of a food cue to examine the influence of general and food reward sensitivity on subsequent snack food consumption. The second presentation reports on an independent study that examined the effect of induced acute stress on the relationship between reward sensitivity and snack food consumption. The third presentation reports effects of reward sensitivity on binge drinkers’ attentional bias towards alcohol cues. The final study examines the extent to which reward sensitivity influences processing and acceptance of road safety messages.